
HOUSE BILL 1659

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2007 Regular Session

By Representatives P. Sullivan and Santos

Read first time 01/24/2007. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the high school Washington assessment of student
2 learning; amending RCW 28A.655.061 and 28A.655.070; adding a new
3 section to chapter 28A.655 RCW; creating a new section; and providing
4 an expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that, although much
7 public debate is occurring regarding student performance on the high
8 school Washington assessment of student learning in mathematics,
9 student performance on the assessment in science should be of equal or
10 greater concern. In 2006, only thirty-five percent of tenth grade
11 students met the state standard on the science assessment. The
12 improvement trend in science scores since 2002 has been minimal.
13 Therefore the legislature intends to initiate revisions to the science
14 assessment while delaying the graduation requirement in science so that
15 there is adequate time to realign curriculum, instruction, and
16 assessment in science before students are required to meet the standard
17 on the Washington assessment of student learning in science for high
18 school graduation.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.655.061 and 2006 c 115 s 4 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

3 (1) The high school assessment system shall include but need not be
4 limited to the Washington assessment of student learning, opportunities
5 for a student to retake the content areas of the assessment in which
6 the student was not successful, and if approved by the legislature
7 pursuant to subsection (10) of this section, one or more objective
8 alternative assessments for a student to demonstrate achievement of
9 state academic standards. The objective alternative assessments for
10 each content area shall be comparable in rigor to the skills and
11 knowledge that the student must demonstrate on the Washington
12 assessment of student learning for each content area.

13 (2) Subject to the conditions in this section, a certificate of
14 academic achievement shall be obtained by most students at about the
15 age of sixteen, and is evidence that the students have successfully met
16 the state standard in the content areas included in the certificate.
17 With the exception of students satisfying the provisions of RCW
18 28A.155.045, acquisition of the certificate is required for graduation
19 from a public high school but is not the only requirement for
20 graduation.

21 (3) Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, with the exception
22 of students satisfying the provisions of RCW 28A.155.045, a student who
23 meets the state standards on the reading, writing, and mathematics
24 content areas of the high school Washington assessment of student
25 learning shall earn a certificate of academic achievement. If a
26 student does not successfully meet the state standards in one or more
27 content areas required for the certificate of academic achievement,
28 then the student may retake the assessment in the content area up to
29 four times at no cost to the student. If the student successfully
30 meets the state standards on a retake of the assessment then the
31 student shall earn a certificate of academic achievement. Once
32 objective alternative assessments are authorized pursuant to subsection
33 (10) of this section, a student may use the objective alternative
34 assessments to demonstrate that the student successfully meets the
35 state standards for that content area if the student has retaken the
36 Washington assessment of student learning at least once. If the
37 student successfully meets the state standards on the objective

1 alternative assessments then the student shall earn a certificate of
2 academic achievement.

3 (4) Beginning with the graduating class of ~~((2010))~~ 2015, a student
4 must meet the state standards in science in addition to the other
5 content areas required under subsection (3) of this section on the
6 Washington assessment of student learning or the objective alternative
7 assessments in order to earn a certificate of academic achievement.

8 (5) The state board of education may not require the acquisition of
9 the certificate of academic achievement for students in home-based
10 instruction under chapter 28A.200 RCW, for students enrolled in private
11 schools under chapter 28A.195 RCW, or for students satisfying the
12 provisions of RCW 28A.155.045.

13 (6) A student may retain and use the highest result from each
14 successfully completed content area of the high school assessment.

15 (7) ~~((Beginning in 2006,))~~ School districts must make available to
16 students the following options:

17 (a) To retake the Washington assessment of student learning up to
18 four times in the content areas in which the student did not meet the
19 state standards if the student is enrolled in a public school; or

20 (b) To retake the Washington assessment of student learning up to
21 four times in the content areas in which the student did not meet the
22 state standards if the student is enrolled in a high school completion
23 program at a community or technical college. The superintendent of
24 public instruction and the state board for community and technical
25 colleges shall jointly identify means by which students in these
26 programs can be assessed.

27 (8) Students who achieve the standard in a content area of the high
28 school assessment but who wish to improve their results shall pay for
29 retaking the assessment, using a uniform cost determined by the
30 superintendent of public instruction.

31 ~~((Subject to available funding, the superintendent shall pilot
32 opportunities for retaking the high school assessment beginning in the
33 2004-05 school year. Beginning no later than September 2006,))~~
34 Opportunities to retake the assessment at least twice a year shall be
35 available to each school district.

36 (10)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction
37 shall develop options for implementing objective alternative
38 assessments, which may include an appeals process, for students to

1 demonstrate achievement of the state academic standards. The objective
2 alternative assessments shall be comparable in rigor to the skills and
3 knowledge that the student must demonstrate on the Washington
4 assessment of student learning and be objective in its determination of
5 student achievement of the state standards. Before any objective
6 alternative assessments in addition to those authorized in RCW
7 28A.655.065 or (b) of this subsection are used by a student to
8 demonstrate that the student has met the state standards in a content
9 area required to obtain a certificate, the legislature shall formally
10 approve the use of any objective alternative assessments through the
11 omnibus appropriations act or by statute or concurrent resolution.

12 (b) A student's score on the mathematics portion of the preliminary
13 scholastic assessment test (PSAT), the scholastic assessment test
14 (SAT), or the American college test (ACT) may be used as an objective
15 alternative assessment under this section for demonstrating that a
16 student has met or exceeded the mathematics standards for the
17 certificate of academic achievement. The state board of education
18 shall identify the scores students must achieve on the mathematics
19 portion of the PSAT, SAT, or ACT to meet or exceed the state standard
20 for mathematics. The state board of education shall identify the first
21 scores by December 1, 2006, and thereafter may increase but not
22 decrease the scores required for students to meet or exceed the state
23 standard for mathematics.

24 (11) By December 15, 2004, the house of representatives and senate
25 education committees shall obtain information and conclusions from
26 recognized, independent, national assessment experts regarding the
27 validity and reliability of the high school Washington assessment of
28 student learning for making individual student high school graduation
29 determinations.

30 (12) To help assure continued progress in academic achievement as
31 a foundation for high school graduation and to assure that students are
32 on track for high school graduation, each school district shall prepare
33 plans for students as provided in this subsection (12).

34 (a) Student learning plans are required for eighth through twelfth
35 grade students who were not successful on any or all of the content
36 areas of the Washington assessment for student learning during the
37 previous school year. The plan shall include the courses,

1 competencies, and other steps needed to be taken by the student to meet
2 state academic standards and stay on track for graduation. ((This
3 requirement shall be phased in as follows:

4 (i) ~~Beginning no later than the 2004-05 school year ninth grade~~
5 ~~students as described in this subsection (12)(a) shall have a plan.~~

6 (ii) ~~Beginning no later than the 2005-06 school year and every year~~
7 ~~thereafter eighth grade students as described in this subsection~~
8 ~~(12)(a) shall have a plan.~~

9 (iii)) (i) The parent or guardian shall be notified, preferably
10 through a parent conference, of the student's results on the Washington
11 assessment of student learning, actions the school intends to take to
12 improve the student's skills in any content area in which the student
13 was unsuccessful, strategies to help them improve their student's
14 skills, and the content of the student's plan.

15 ((iv)) (ii) Progress made on the student plan shall be reported
16 to the student's parents or guardian at least annually and adjustments
17 to the plan made as necessary.

18 (b) ((Beginning with the 2005-06 school year and every year
19 thereafter,)) All fifth grade students who were not successful in one
20 or more of the content areas of the fourth grade Washington assessment
21 of student learning shall have a student learning plan.

22 (i) The parent or guardian of a student described in this
23 subsection (12)(b) shall be notified, preferably through a parent
24 conference, of the student's results on the Washington assessment of
25 student learning, actions the school intends to take to improve the
26 student's skills in any content area in which the student was
27 unsuccessful, and provide strategies to help them improve their
28 student's skills.

29 (ii) Progress made on the student plan shall be reported to the
30 student's parents or guardian at least annually and adjustments to the
31 plan made as necessary.

32 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.655.070 and 2005 c 497 s 106 are each amended to
33 read as follows:

34 (1) The superintendent of public instruction shall develop
35 essential academic learning requirements that identify the knowledge
36 and skills all public school students need to know and be able to do
37 based on the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210, develop student

1 assessments, and implement the accountability recommendations and
2 requests regarding assistance, rewards, and recognition of the state
3 board of education.

4 (2) The superintendent of public instruction shall:

5 (a) Periodically revise the essential academic learning
6 requirements, as needed, based on the student learning goals in RCW
7 28A.150.210. Goals one and two shall be considered primary. To the
8 maximum extent possible, the superintendent shall integrate goal four
9 and the knowledge and skill areas in the other goals in the essential
10 academic learning requirements; and

11 (b) Review and prioritize the essential academic learning
12 requirements and identify, with clear and concise descriptions, the
13 grade level content expectations to be assessed on the Washington
14 assessment of student learning and used for state or federal
15 accountability purposes. The review, prioritization, and
16 identification shall result in more focus and targeting with an
17 emphasis on depth over breadth in the number of grade level content
18 expectations assessed at each grade level. Grade level content
19 expectations shall be articulated over the grades as a sequence of
20 expectations and performances that are logical, build with increasing
21 depth after foundational knowledge and skills are acquired, and
22 reflect, where appropriate, the sequential nature of the discipline.
23 The office of the superintendent of public instruction, within seven
24 working days, shall post on its web site any grade level content
25 expectations provided to an assessment vendor for use in constructing
26 the Washington assessment of student learning.

27 (3)(a) In consultation with the state board of education, the
28 superintendent of public instruction shall maintain and continue to
29 develop and revise a statewide academic assessment system in the
30 content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science for use in
31 the elementary, middle, and high school years designed to determine if
32 each student has mastered the essential academic learning requirements
33 identified in subsection (1) of this section. School districts shall
34 administer the assessments under guidelines adopted by the
35 superintendent of public instruction. The academic assessment system
36 shall include a variety of assessment methods, including criterion-
37 referenced and performance-based measures.

1 (b) As of the effective date of this section, the superintendent of
2 public instruction, in consultation with the state board of education,
3 shall initiate a transition of the Washington assessment of student
4 learning in science from a single comprehensive assessment to a limited
5 series of end-of-course assessments based on the major science content
6 areas addressed in the essential academic learning requirements. The
7 end-of-course assessments shall be able to be administered online. The
8 legislature's intent is that students shall receive instruction through
9 credited high school courses in particular science content areas and
10 have their knowledge and skills in those content areas assessed after
11 they complete the courses. For the purpose of the end-of-course
12 assessments, a course may be less than one year or one credit in
13 length, depending on the content expected to be covered in the course.
14 The transition under this subsection shall follow a timeline that
15 allows for development and field testing of the end-of-course
16 assessments, realignment of the essential academic learning
17 requirements and grade level expectations in science to the extent
18 necessary, development and provision of curriculum guides and
19 professional development for science teachers, revision of the state
20 assessment plan for purposes of Public Law 107-110, the no child left
21 behind act of 2001, and implementation of the end-of-course assessments
22 as a valid and reliable method of assessing whether students meet state
23 standards in science for purposes of high school graduation as required
24 under RCW 28A.655.061.

25 (4) If the superintendent proposes any modification to the
26 essential academic learning requirements or the statewide assessments,
27 then the superintendent shall, upon request, provide opportunities for
28 the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate
29 to review the assessments and proposed modifications to the essential
30 academic learning requirements before the modifications are adopted.

31 (5)((+a)) The assessment system shall be designed so that the
32 results under the assessment system are used by educators as tools to
33 evaluate instructional practices, and to initiate appropriate
34 educational support for students who have not mastered the essential
35 academic learning requirements at the appropriate periods in the
36 student's educational development.

37 ~~((b) Assessments measuring the essential academic learning~~
38 ~~requirements in the content area of science shall be available for~~

1 ~~mandatory use in middle schools and high schools by the 2003-04 school~~
2 ~~year and for mandatory use in elementary schools by the 2004-05 school~~
3 ~~year unless the legislature takes action to delay or prevent~~
4 ~~implementation of the assessment.))~~

5 (6) By September 2007, the results for reading and mathematics
6 shall be reported in a format that will allow parents and teachers to
7 determine the academic gain a student has acquired in those content
8 areas from one school year to the next.

9 (7) To assist parents and teachers in their efforts to provide
10 educational support to individual students, the superintendent of
11 public instruction shall provide as much individual student performance
12 information as possible within the constraints of the assessment
13 system's item bank. The superintendent shall also provide to school
14 districts:

15 (a) Information on classroom-based and other assessments that may
16 provide additional achievement information for individual students; and

17 (b) A collection of diagnostic tools that educators may use to
18 evaluate the academic status of individual students. The tools shall
19 be designed to be inexpensive, easily administered, and quickly and
20 easily scored, with results provided in a format that may be easily
21 shared with parents and students.

22 (8) To the maximum extent possible, the superintendent shall
23 integrate knowledge and skill areas in development of the assessments.

24 (9) Assessments for goals three and four of RCW 28A.150.210 shall
25 be integrated in the essential academic learning requirements and
26 assessments for goals one and two.

27 (10) The superintendent shall develop assessments that are directly
28 related to the essential academic learning requirements, and are not
29 biased toward persons with different learning styles, racial or ethnic
30 backgrounds, or on the basis of gender.

31 (11) The superintendent shall consider methods to address the
32 unique needs of special education students when developing the
33 assessments under this section.

34 (12) The superintendent shall consider methods to address the
35 unique needs of highly capable students when developing the assessments
36 under this section.

37 (13) The superintendent shall post on the superintendent's web site

1 lists of resources and model assessments in social studies, the arts,
2 and health and fitness.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.655
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) The superintendent of public instruction shall report to the
6 education committees of the legislature by January 15, 2008, and each
7 year thereafter until January 15, 2013, on the timelines, major
8 milestones, and progress of the transition of the high school
9 Washington assessment of student learning in science to end-of-course
10 assessments as required by RCW 28A.655.070.

11 (2) This section expires June 30, 2013.

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